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15 February 1963

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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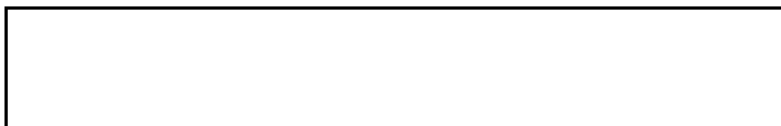
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*Syria: Foreign Minister Mahasin's declaration over Damascus Radio on 14 February proposing federation between Syria and Iraq will greatly increase political tensions in Syria and is likely to precipitate a coup to thwart the scheme.

It is doubtful that Mahasin would have made such a statement unless he felt that a considerable body of opinion in Syria, including important army elements, favors such a move.

A union between Syria and Iraq would create a counterweight to Nasir's influence in the Arab world and would be regarded by him as a serious blow. Union with Iraq has been a controversial issue in Syria for nearly 20 years, and moves toward its realization have precipitated several coups.

Egypt traditionally has fought Iraqi-Syrian union and it is likely that Nasir will do everything in his power to forestall it now.

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International Communism: Moscow is continuing to maneuver for an advantageous position in its dispute with China by posing as the champion of bloc "unity."

By republishing an Indian Communist Party proposal for a world Communist conference next December, Moscow seems for the first time to have endorsed a specific date for such a conference.

Soviet reluctance to actually convene such a meeting, however, is reflected in Moscow's continuing insistence on the necessity of preliminary talks with a cessation of polemics. Moscow realizes that even if preliminary talks are held, they are likely to bog down over such issues as Soviet desire that conference decisions be reached by majority rule rather than unanimous vote and over the role to be played by Albania and Yugoslavia. At this stage, the two countries could no longer even agree to reaffirm the declarations of the previous Moscow meetings in 1957 and 1960.

The coolness of Sino-Soviet relations was reflected in the half-hearted celebrations on 14 February of the Sino-Soviet treaty of alliance signed in 1950. [REDACTED]

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Congo: (Leopoldville appears increasingly determined to introduce more Congo Army (ANC) troops into Katanga despite the objections of UN officials.)

[redacted]
[redacted] additional ANC forces must be sent into Katanga by 16 February "at the very latest." While this date may not be met, Leopoldville wants to get three battalions into key points in order to establish a firm grip on the province before UN troops begin their withdrawal next month.)

(UN officials fear that the presence in Southern Katanga of more ANC troops not under UN command might cause serious incidents and possibly cause an exodus of panicky Europeans.)

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United Kingdom: (Harold Wilson, Labor Party expert on foreign affairs, was elected leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party on 14 February in a close contest with George Brown, the party's deputy leader.)

(Wilson is a long-time favorite of the party's more militant left wing, and has opposed West German rearmament and favored unilateral nuclear disarmament, nationalization of basic industries, and increased East-West trade.)

(As party leader, however, Wilson will be under compulsion to assume moderate attitudes on major issues in order to secure his succession to the late Hugh Gaitskell and to preserve party unity. Moreover, he will presumably wish to shed his reputation as an advocate of extreme positions in order to win public acceptance as a responsible national leader and potential prime minister.)

(Moderate Labor MPs have apparently become reconciled to Wilson's leadership and hope to influence him to continue Gaitskell's policies on major foreign and domestic issues.)

(The party still faces difficult problems, however, in weathering the loss of Gaitskell. A refusal by deputy leader Brown to continue in office, for example, would cause further disarray before the next general election.)

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